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IN THE CLAIMS:

1-2. (Canceled)

3. (Currently Amended) A semiconductor device, comprising:  
a gate electrode formed over a gate insulating film; and  
a hard mask formed over the gate electrode; and  
an interlayer insulating film over the hard mask,  
wherein the interlayer insulating film is in contact with at least a part of a lateral face  
of the gate electrode.

4. (Currently Amended) A semiconductor device, comprising:  
a gate electrode formed over a gate insulating film;  
a hard mask formed over the gate electrode; and  
an interlayer insulating film over the hard mask; and  
a conductive film which is in contact with the gate electrode,  
wherein the interlayer insulating film is in contact with at least a part of a lateral face  
of the gate electrode, and  
wherein the conductive film is to serve as a wire for sending a signal to the gate  
electrode or as a connection layer for connecting a wire with the gate electrode.

5-8. (Canceled)

9. (Original) A semiconductor device, according to claim 3, wherein the gate  
electrode is selected from the group consisting of tantalum nitride and tungsten.

10. (Original) A semiconductor device, according to claim 3, wherein the hard mask  
is selected from the group consisting of silicon oxide.

11. (Original) A semiconductor device, according to claim 4, wherein the gate  
electrode is selected from the group consisting of tantalum nitride and tungsten.

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12. (Original) A semiconductor device, according to claim 4, wherein the hard mask is selected from the group consisting of silicon oxide.

13. (Original) A semiconductor device, according to claim 4, wherein the conductive film is selected from the group consisting of tantalum nitride and tungsten.

14. (Previously Presented) A semiconductor device, comprising:  
a gate electrode formed over a gate insulating film; and,  
an island shaped hard mask formed over the gate electrode,  
wherein side walls of the island shaped hard mask have an angle of inclination of 0° or more, and of 90° or less.

15. (Previously Presented) A semiconductor device, comprising:  
a gate electrode formed over a gate insulating film; and,  
an island shaped hard mask formed over the gate electrode,  
wherein side walls of the island shaped hard mask forms arc shapes.

16. (Previously Presented) A semiconductor device, according to claim 14, wherein the angle is inclination of 35° or more, and 50° or less.

17. (Previously Presented) A semiconductor device, according to claim 14, wherein the gate electrode is selected from the group consisting of tantalum nitride and tungsten.

18. (Previously Presented) A semiconductor device, according to claim 14, wherein the island shaped hard mask is selected from the group consisting of silicon oxide.

19. (Previously Presented) A semiconductor device, according to claim 15, wherein the gate electrode is selected from the group consisting of tantalum nitride and tungsten.

20. (Previously Presented) A semiconductor device, according to claim 15, wherein the island shaped hard mask is selected from the group consisting of silicon oxide.

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21. (Previously Presented) A semiconductor device, comprising:  
a gate electrode formed over a gate insulating film;  
an island shaped hard mask formed over the gate electrode; and  
a conductive film which is in contact with the gate electrode,  
wherein the conductive film is to serve as a wire for sending a signal to the gate  
electrode or as a connection layer for connecting a wire with the gate electrode, and  
wherein side walls of the island shaped hard mask have an angle of inclination of 0°  
or more, and of 90° or less.

22. (Previously Presented) A semiconductor device, comprising:  
a gate electrode formed over a gate insulating film;  
an island shaped hard mask formed over the gate electrode; and  
a conductive film which is in contact with the gate electrode,  
wherein the conductive film is to serve as a wire for sending a signal to the gate  
electrode or as a connection layer for connecting a wire with the gate electrode, and  
wherein side walls of the island shaped hard mask forms arc shapes.

23. (Previously Presented) A semiconductor device, according to claim 21, wherein  
the angle is inclination of 35° or more, and 50° or less.

24. (Previously Presented) A semiconductor device, according to claim 21, wherein  
the gate electrode is selected from the group consisting of tantalum nitride and tungsten.

25. (Previously Presented) A semiconductor device, according to claim 21, wherein  
the island shaped hard mask is selected from the group consisting of silicon oxide.

26. (Previously Presented) A semiconductor device, according to claim 22, wherein  
the gate electrode is selected from the group consisting of tantalum nitride and tungsten.

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27. (Previously Presented) A semiconductor device, according to claim 22 wherein the island shaped hard mask is selected from the group consisting of silicon oxide.

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